

# HAWAII MODERN LUXURY

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## FASHION AND HOME SPECIAL

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TAKES OFF!



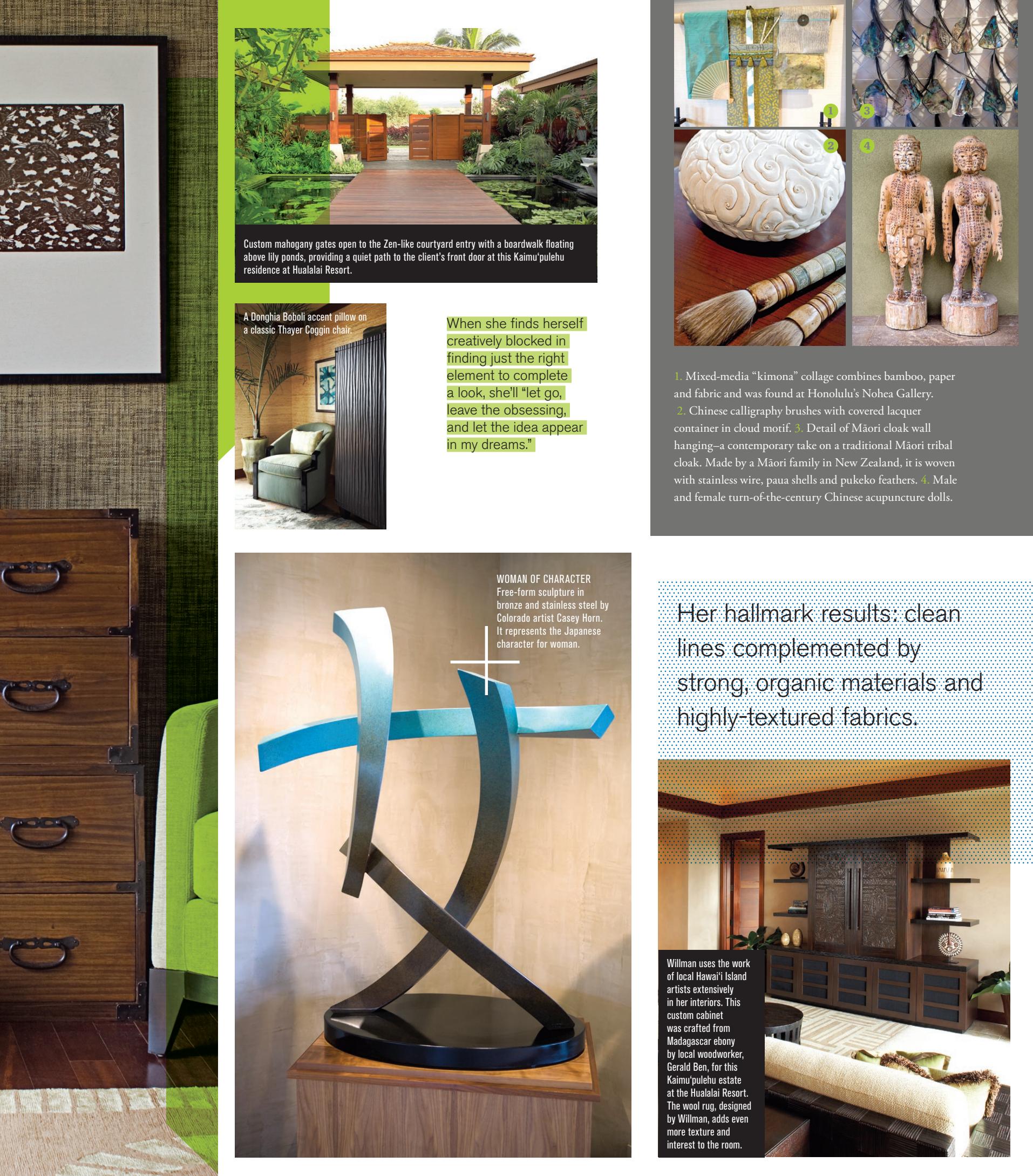
# Gina Willman

Native New Zealander Gina Willman, ASID, always imagined running her own design firm. Growing up in Auckland, Willman dreamed of finding herself stylishly ensconced in an edgy, urban loft, complete with an elegant dog at her feet. But life had its own plans, she laughs. Today, a Quonset hut is home to her design studio in sleepy Kamuela town on Hawai'i Island. As for that sleek hound? Sub in a furry malamute, who, more often than not, is found sleeping under her desk.

No worries. This creative and exuberant "down under" beauty turns out over-the-top contemporary design in her sleep, regardless of location or canine companion! Willman, owner of W Interiors, who completed interior design training at Auckland's Unitec New Zealand, **CONTINUED...**

**WILL(MAN) POWER!** Gina Willman on-site at one of her most recent luxury home installations at the Hualalai Resort. The interiors for this home were designed by Willman in collaboration with W Interiors partner, Toni Knudson.





Custom mahogany gates open to the Zen-like courtyard entry with a boardwalk floating above lily ponds, providing a quiet path to the client's front door at this Kaimu'pulehu residence at Hualalai Resort.

A Donghia Boboli accent pillow on a classic Thayer Coggin chair.

When she finds herself creatively blocked in finding just the right element to complete a look, she'll "let go, leave the obsessing, and let the idea appear in my dreams."

1. Mixed-media "kimono" collage combines bamboo, paper and fabric and was found at Honolulu's Nohea Gallery.

2. Chinese calligraphy brushes with covered lacquer container in cloud motif. 3. Detail of Maori cloak wall hanging—a contemporary take on a traditional Maori tribal cloak. Made by a Maori family in New Zealand, it is woven with stainless wire, paua shells and pukeko feathers. 4. Male and female turn-of-the-century Chinese acupuncture dolls.

Her hallmark results: clean lines complemented by strong, organic materials and highly-textured fabrics.



Willman uses the work of local Hawai'i Island artists extensively in her interiors. This custom cabinet was crafted from Madagascar ebony by local woodworker, Gerald Ben, for this Kaimu'pulehu estate at the Hualalai Resort. The wool rug, designed by Willman, adds even more texture and interest to the room.

...CONTINUED derives much of her inspiration from dreams. A notebook, she says, is always near at hand on her nightstand to capture nocturnal visions. In fact, often when she finds herself creatively blocked in finding just the right element to complete a look, she'll "let go, leave the obsessing, and let the idea appear in my dreams."

Willman's formal training in art (sculpture, painting, architectural drafting) and design, however, provide the foundation for her hallmark results: clean lines complemented by strong, organic materials (basalt, river rocks, granite-flaked wall coverings, indigenous woods) and highly-textured fabrics. All of the above were most likely greatly influenced by the natural surroundings of her beloved New Zealand. "I've always been drawn to organic objects, most especially smooth river rocks. Not long ago, a mystic read my aura and was surprised to find it filled with stones...shocking to her; to me, not at all," she says.

A talented young artist, Willman's early schooling focused on painting and sculpture. Her father, an engineer, and her high school art instructor—both keen observers of her emerging skills—encouraged her to channel her vision and expertise in architecture or design. She listened to them—and her own inner voice—and chose to follow her passion for design with formal training at Unitec. She attributes her love and knowledge of multi-textured, unique fabrics and textiles, however, to her mother, "a stay-at-home mom" and an accomplished seamstress.

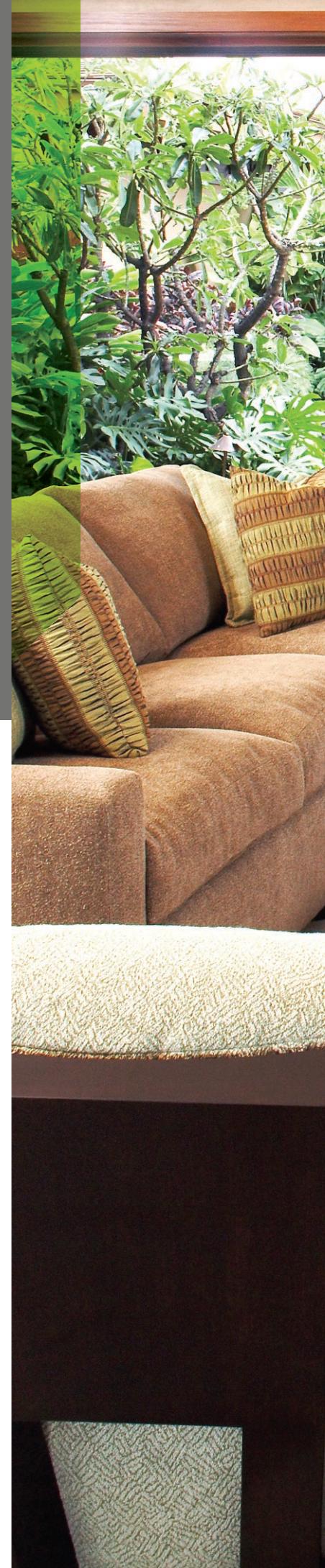
Willman most often chooses a neutral palette for furnishings, accenting the "blank canvas" with artwork, hand-woven rugs of her own custom design and various home accessories in colors influenced by her native island nation—both its native Māori culture and contemporary style—as well as that of her current Hawai'i Island home. While neutrals, clean lines and organic materials are clearly her thing, she also delights in shifting gears to "cutesy up" twin-bedded "children's suites" using more color and whimsical, fun objects. This lighter touch, perhaps, is an opportunity to expose a bit more of herself in her work by sharing a glimpse of life at home with her husband and children.

While Willman's impressive portfolio reflects great versatility with its diverse collection of work projects completed for both residential and commercial clients (primarily high-end resorts, spas, restaurants and retail stores), she says her specialty is designing luxury residences for individuals looking for inimitable personal expression in their living spaces. Getting to know the client's personal style is one of the drivers that led to her decision to now focus on residential design. She cites one recent client, an avid collector of Israeli artist Avi Kiriaty, as an example. "He requested everything in the expansive home be designed around the art collection...color, texture, emotion and feel. An interesting challenge. The reward was his pleasure when the home was completed," Willman said.

"It really comes down to connecting with people and tapping into their dreams of home and lifestyle to create a space that delivers—and ideally exceeds—their expectations." Willman adds, "I can breathe again when I hear the words, 'Wow, I love it!'"



Minimalist, water-submerged chaise longues, pictured above, provide a cool viewpoint from a Kaimu'pulehu estate's infinity-edge pool. Pictured at right, for the home's interior, Willman used neutral tones to provide a "blank canvas" for accents of color. The polished bamboo coffee table is framed by A. Rudin sofas and Berman Rosetti chairs. The custom triptych is by Honolulu artist Marc Turner.



**ROCK STAR** A custom basalt tub from Waterworks takes center stage in the master bath of this Kuikawa project at Hualalai Resort. "I've always been drawn to organic objects, most especially smooth river rocks," says Willman.

